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NOTES AND REVIEWS

Russo-American Relations, March, 1917-March, 1920. Documents and Papers. Compiled and edited by C. K. CUMMING and WALTER W. PETTIT. Under the direction of John A. Ryan, J. Henry Scattergood, Wm. Allen White. At the request of the League of Free Nations Association. New York. Harcourt, Brace, & Howe. 1920.

The disease that has settled on the present, and that threatens the future, will not respond to a single cure. Many improvements in civilization must be made if we are to avoid dark decades. One dominating truth can be laid down with confidence, however; that progress toward peace and production is not possible except with a larger and more sympathetic understanding between the nations. Obvious, then, is the importance of a collection like the one put out by the League of Free Nations Association—a collection that throws much light on one of the most fundamental and difficult questions of the age. The treatment of Russia by the Entente is at least as much the “acid test” of our sincerity as it was when President Wilson gave it that description.

Had the Entente met the acid test successfully the western governments would have been able to say to their people: “We have let Russia alone. She is making her struggle between socialism and individualism. That difficult adjustment is not our affair. The allies did no good to France or the world by combining against the French Revolution. They did not succeed even in making the new government pay the debts of the old régime. They brought about Napoleon, and indirectly they caused Sedan and the currents that led up to 1914. Because they liked the French king and his friends better than they liked the impatient populace they plunged Europe into a long series of wars and alliances. The analogy today is as close as an analogy could be between two periods so widely different. For us, after the French example, there would be no forgiveness if we allowed this new revolution to lead us into so deadly a mistake of policy.”

Instead of such a rule of action the Entente adopted a confused procedure that has left the question in this form: Can the

dominating influences in the Entente and the United States overthrow a Russian government, merely because it is communist? That the present government in Moscow is a functioning, *de facto* government is clear to all intelligent persons, no matter how many fairy tales a week the bureaucrats put out to try to prove that matters are worse in Russia than they are in other parts of central and eastern Europe that have the assistance of the Entente, to some slight degree, instead of being forced to fight many and large armies backed by the Entente, thus being forced as a consequence to use the railroads and the factories for warfare instead of for reconstruction. Perhaps it is necessary, in the present ignorant and hysterical state of American opinion, for me to say explicitly that I happen to be a disbeliever in communism. I write not as a Marxian but as one who values the centuries of hard-won liberties that have made the Anglo-Saxon tradition, and who is consequently depressed over the degree to which in defeating Prussia we have become ourselves prussianized.

The most important thing is for the public to know, in spite of the fog of official propaganda, what actually has happened, and this collection brings help to all who are willing to make their own study of the subject. The more it is studied the less dependent will our public and our newspapers be on the little groups of flattering human beings who have been in positions so much too exacting for them. In no period of modern history has there been more tragically illustrated man's inability to match his mechanical inventiveness with political wisdom and with sufficient love and truth. There are men who on this topic have done all that man can be expected to do, as for example Smuts and Cecil and Henderson, but taking the spectacle as a whole it justifies Shakspeare's often-quoted lines:

"man, proud man,
Drest in a little brief authority,
Most ignorant of what he's most assured,
His glassy essence, like an angry ape,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
As make the angels weep."

The story begins with the first revolution of 1917. The Tsar is overthrown because of the inefficiency of his government. The long-suffering people have been put in a wholly different position by the war. Sixteen million of them have been mobil-

ized. For over two years and a half they have been dying like flies, without results that they can see, and they now suspect not only inefficiency but treachery. The leaders of the Duma see that Russia can no longer continue with the war in such circumstances. They take over the government. The first attempts at government are bourgeois; the leaders are big land owners, like Prince Lvov, business men, and intellectuals like Milyukov. These attempts fail. The people want peace and land and the bourgeois government promises them a consideration of the land question after the war and invites them to go on fighting. The people do not see much difference in their situation in this change of government. Twelve days after the Tsar abdicates we find a proclamation signed by the Petrograd Soviet, or Council, of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Already governments are distrusted and this proclamation is addressed to the laboring people of all countries, not to their governments. Thus we see that the Bolsheviks did not create the prevailing conditions. They were an insignificant group at that time. The Soviets had taken on great power before the Tsar abdicated and it was absurd to suppose any government could carry on the war without satisfying these Councils. If Bolshevism as we know it had scarcely raised its head, Socialism as a larger force was strong. This proclamation ended with the momentous words, "proletarians of all countries, unite." But it said also "the peoples of Russia will express their will in the Constituent Assembly." In order to exist the provisional government has to drop Milyukov, to come out for a peace without annexations or indemnities, and to take six Socialist members into the government. But it gets no action out of its allies and in May the Soviet issues the famous call for a meeting at Stockholm on June 2. The moderate Socialist Kerenski, made prime minister in an attempt to satisfy the people, tries to get the Entente to coöperate in the attempt to bring about a "peace without victory," but in vain. Lloyd George declares publicly that Kerenski is against the Stockholm conference and Mr. Henderson, retiring from the cabinet, proves that Mr. Lloyd George is telling a gross falsehood. The United States and the Entente governments prevent the Stockholm conference from being held. The attempt of General Kornilov has general sympathy in the foreign press, which wants a "strong man," meaning, I take it, a man who promises to fight and pay no attention to the rebellious Russian masses. Kerenski in October repeats his demand for "a peace excluding violence on

either side." On November 1 Kerenski gives an interview in which he says that Russia is worn out economically, that life in general is disorganized, and that the Russian Revolution is not political but economic. That was nearly three years ago, three years of incessant fighting, and yet our newspapers hunt for the causes in the theories of Lenin. A preliminary parliament is attempted, but nothing comes of it, there is no approach to a policy, and the Bolsheviks disperse it and seize the power.

Anybody who buys this volume (which, in the main, my narrative follows) to help him orient himself about Russia will do well to read document 25, the Bolshevik program and invitation to the world. Our diplomacy protests. Brest-Litovsk follows. We know now from the writings of Ludendorff and others how much harm it did Germany even in a military sense to attempt to impose a settlement of force on Russia. Our vacillating and ignorant policy toward the new Soviet government is pictured in these documents with special fullness, thanks to Colonel Robins' collection of documents and to some others not heretofore made public. The gist of it all is that we were lured first into fighting the Russians on the pretext that we were getting at the Germans in that way; then that we were protecting "westward-moving" Czechs-Slovaks; until finally, after we had settled into the habit of fighting the Russians, the reason became the autocratic nature of the new government and its terrible atrocities. So we give semi-recognition to an autocratic general whose friends had made him dictator after overthrowing a liberal government in Siberia, and we continue fighting to help Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenitch and others until we get tired of that and finally content ourselves with helping to maintain a blockade while declaring that it is not a blockade, only a refusal to allow trade.

At first our relation to the new government of the Soviets was friendly, as there is a mass of evidence here to show, but as soon as we had drifted into war against them they, by the psychological rules of war, became devils. Lloyd George has steadily seen beyond these puerilities and endeavored to restore peace, France has as steadily thwarted every effort, and we have drifted about with the practical result of helping the French policy. I suggest that readers compare document 151 with document 141. Also that they read document 150, realizing that the "request" to blockade was also made to neutrals.

That is practically the end of the story, as far as this volume goes. The decision to permit trade, taken last February, is given, but that is only the beginning of a story that promises to be long and disastrous, with France again taking the lead and ourselves acquiescing. It will be another chapter in the story of the acid test: a further basis for comparing this historic event with Europe's attempt, a century and a quarter ago, to control the cause of the revolution in France.

NORMAN HAPGOOD.

A Short History of the Great War. By A. F. POLLARD, M.A., Litt.D. New York. Harcourt, Brace & Howe, 1920. 411 pp.

Primarily a military history of the years 1914-1918, this work has a few very interesting passages on political matters but gives almost no space to the economic phases of the struggle. As a brief summary of the great military movements it should meet with favor because of its rapid, interesting style, its fair minded attitude and its well proportioned distribution of space to the various campaigns.

Mr. Pollard was already well-known in this country as the first Goldwyn Smith lecturer at Cornell and as the author of numerous historical works of high merit, as professor of English history in the University of London and as editor of *History*. This book will not doubt add to his popularity. It makes no claim to being a definitive history of the World War, but sets forth the salient facts in a compact, clear and interesting form for the general reader. In his first chapter the author discusses what he happily calls "The breach of the peace," beginning rather abruptly with the crime of Serajevo. While the lack of perception on the part of the statesmen of other countries for not foreseeing Germany's intentions, is severely castigated, full blame is placed upon the over-weening ambition of Germany and her absence of moral principle.

In general, as to the plan of the book, it may be said that Mr. Pollard follows the chronological-topical order. Thus in his first few chapters he discusses the German invasion of France, the first Russian campaign, the naval war, and the struggle in Africa. After chapters on the establishment of the western front and the first winter of the war, he returns to the various fronts, discussing in order the Allied counter-offensive, the repulse of Russia, the entrance of Bulgaria, and the Dardanelles campaign